

condition of our State's schools. The commission identified safety, legal compliance improvements and repairs urgently needed in our schools. They identified other repairs and other necessary improvements idly waiting funding with faint hope of assistance from State and municipal budgets.

Students cannot learn in classrooms with leaky ceilings, poor air quality and wiring that could not support modern technology such as computers. America's students would be far better off by adopting the Rangel school construction plan than by adopting a misguided proposal that will help relatively few families send their children to private school.

I urge my colleagues to invest in our educational infrastructure and to support the Rangel motion.

#### REPUBLICANS DELIVER FOR TOBACCO COMPANIES

(Mr. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker and Members of the House, over the past 3 years, the tobacco companies have delivered millions of dollars to the Republican National Committee and to the Republican Congressional Campaign Committee and to Republican Members of the House of Representatives and of the Senate.

Yesterday, the United States Senate delivered for the tobacco companies. Yesterday, the United States Senate, after a month of debate and delay, voted to kill the tobacco bill, which was designed to get back to and pay back many of the health care costs that this government has spent because of tobacco illnesses and death, and to try to keep our young children from smoking. Yesterday the Senate killed that. They delivered on their campaign promises.

Today the House sets out to do the same. It is setting out to kill campaign finance reform so that they can continue to keep the tobacco money flowing to the Republican Party.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NEY). Members need to be reminded that it is not within the rules to refer to actions of the Senate on the floor of the House.

#### AMERICA NEEDS SCHOOL CHOICE

(Mr. BARR of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, in my home State of Georgia, a record number of high school juniors, over 17,000, failed this year to pass a basic skills test as a prerequisite for graduation.

This week the House of Representatives took steps to respond to this problem by passing a resolution condemning the deplorable practice of promoting unqualified students for social reasons. This must be viewed as only the first step.

We must follow it by taking creative steps to increase parental choice and involvement in education such as encouraging charter schools, establishing education savings accounts, protecting the rights of parents to home school their children, and exploring the notion of school vouchers.

For decades, teachers, students and Washington bureaucrats have tried to shape our education system, yet their involvement has resulted in higher and higher spending and lower and lower performance. It is time to turn things around. The fact is, bureaucrats and big labor do not, cannot and should not educate our children. Teachers and parents do, should and must.

If we are really serious about improving education, let us not worry about schools, let us worry about teaching the hearts and minds of our students with parents and teachers, with the best interests of those students in mind.

#### PASS CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. MENENDEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the other body of the Congress failed America's children by killing campaign—

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Speaker, it is inappropriate to mention the other body.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct about such characterizations.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Is not "the other body" the appropriate way to refer to the Senate?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Critical references to the other body are not in order.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, someone killed tobacco legislation and failed the children in this country. I guess we do not want to talk about who failed the children in this country, and bowed to big tobacco interests. Here in the House, the Republican leadership is trying to kill campaign finance reform through death by amendment.

Listen to what our colleague, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. SMITH), a Republican representative, in yesterday's Wall Street Journal said

about the GOP leadership's unquenchable love of cash. She quickly discovered that it was a common practice for the GOP majority to hold up action on bills while milking interested contributors for more campaign contributions, and she said, "We do what? Isn't that extortion?" I think it is. I think LINDA SMITH is right.

The fact of the matter is, the reason that the Republican leadership is trying to kill campaign finance reform in this House is because they would not be allowed to continue what LINDA SMITH calls "extortion." She is right, and we should pass campaign finance reform in this House.

#### SUPPORT EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

(Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, yesterday President Clinton, in a letter to Speaker GINGRICH, wrote that the legislation creating education savings accounts, which we will consider today, would weaken public education and shortchange our children. That charge is preposterous.

I would like one Democrat to explain why giving parents more control and more power over their children's education would not be good for their children. I would like one Democrat on the other side to explain how more competition would result in worse schools. I would like one Democrat to look in the eyes of children in dangerous or dysfunctional schools and explain why they would want to keep them there. I would like one Democrat to explain why they would sell out American children, once again, to the education special interests who block every real reform that comes to this body, and who are the ones who are shortchanging our children.

Today, let us vote for the children. Let us support education savings accounts.

#### KIDS WILL DIE IF THEY BEGIN SMOKING

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, every day in America, 3,000 children begin to smoke. 1,000 of those children will die. Yesterday, the other body of this Congress gave those children a death notice by failing to pass a comprehensive tobacco reform bill supported by bipartisan public health groups around the Nation.

Shame, shame, shame.

But I will take the time, which I hope my colleagues will do as well, to listen to the children. We will bring children from around the Nation here to the United States Capitol on Wednesday, June 24, to listen to their